

The Western Health & Social Care Trust is committed to providing high quality services. However, if you have a complaint about our services, tell us about it. We need to know if our performance is not up to standard or if you are unhappy, so that we can learn and improve the quality of services we provide. We will take your complaint seriously and treat it in confidence.

Making a complaint does not affect your rights and will not result in the loss of any service you have been assessed as requiring.

WHO CAN COMPLAIN?

Anyone who uses our services can complain. You can also complain on someone else's behalf, although we may need their consent.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

You can make your complaint in the way that best suits you. This can be face to face, on the telephone or in a letter. You should provide us with details of:

- how to contact you;
- who or what you are complaining about;
- where and when the event that caused your complaint happened; and
- where possible, what action you would like us to take

You should try to complain as soon as possible after the action giving rise to it, normally within 6 months of the event. If you were not aware at that time there was cause for complaint, you can still complain within 6 months of becoming aware there was a cause for

complaint but normally no longer than 12 months after the cause of your complaint.

Initially, you can speak to any of the staff who are dealing with your treatment or care and they will try to resolve your concerns straight away. If they can't, they will tell you what to do next.

We also have a Complaints Manager and Complaints Officers who can help you. Contact details as follows:

Complaints Department

**Trust Headquarters, MDEC Building,
Altnagelvin Area Hospital, Londonderry
BT47 6SB**

**Tel: 028 71345171 Ext.: 214130 / 214142
/214121 / 214122 / 214194**

Or Direct Dial No. 028 71611226

Email:

complaints.department@westerntrust.hscni.net

If at any stage you feel you would like to discuss your concerns in person, the Complaints Team would be happy to meet with you. Do bring along a friend or relative if you would like their support.

HELP WITH MAKING A COMPLAINT

Our Complaints Team can provide you with more information on how to make a complaint.

Alternatively, the Patient and Client Council can provide free and confidential advice, information

and help to make a complaint. This might include help with writing letters; making telephone calls, and supporting you at any meetings you might need to attend. You can get more information on the services provided by the Patient and Client Council at: www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net or by phoning Freephone 0800 917 0222

Specialist advocacy services may also be available to help you through the process of complaining. Our Complaints Manager or the Patient and Client Council will be able to provide you with further details of this support.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt. We will aim to respond to your complaint in full within 20 working days. Some complaints take longer to resolve than others. We will tell you if it becomes clear that we are unable to respond within these timescales.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE RESPONSE GIVEN

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can contact the Complaints Manager again and we will do our best to resolve your concerns.

If you remain unhappy you can refer your complaint to the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) at the following address: **Freepost NIPSO (Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman), Progressive House 33 Wellington Place, Belfast, BT1 6HN or Freephone: 0800 34 34 24**

You can also email nipso@nipso.org.uk. Further information on the role of NIPSO can be found at www.nipso.org.uk. Please note that NIPSO will not normally accept your complaint until the complaints process with the Trust has been exhausted. You must bring your complaint to NIPSO within six months of completion of the Trust's complaints process.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT REGULATED ESTABLISHMENTS, E.G. NURSING OR RESIDENTIAL HOMES.

If your complaint relates to a placement we have made in an establishment such as a nursing or residential home, you can complain to the provider of care or, if you prefer, you can raise your concerns with us. If you are not happy with the response you receive, you can refer your complaint to NIPSO

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) is the independent Health and Social Care regulatory body for Northern Ireland, who will monitor how complaints about regulated services are handled. Further information about services provided by RQIA is available at Tel: 02890 517500 or web: www.rqia.org.uk

We value all your views, so if you have;

COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

We will consider all your comments and suggestions, share them with relevant staff and make changes, if possible.

COMPLIMENTS

We will use your compliments to highlight good practice and will pass them on to the relevant department or person. You can make a compliment to the Patients Advocate in writing or by email:

compliments@westerntrust.hscni.net

This information is available in large print and other formats upon request.

More information on the complaints procedure is also available at:

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hsccomplaints.htm

A GUIDE TO THE COMPLAINTS /COMPLIMENTS PROCEDURE

LISTENING

LEARNING

IMPROVING

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

We welcome your complaints, compliments, comments and concerns